

February 26, 2014

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE WATER COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a special session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26, 2014 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Kawai, Leone, Marshall,
McGee, See, and Chairperson Nishinaga.

Absent: Commissioner Craft.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste, Senior Administrative Analyst
Schaich, and Senior Water Services Supervisor Berndt.

MOTION: Commissioner Marshall moved to grant Commissioner Craft an excused absence for the February 26, 2014 Commission meeting. Commissioner Leone seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Marshall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

The Special meeting was properly noticed. Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich reported that Chairperson Nishinaga called this special meeting because there was a mis-communication between the Water staff and the City Clerk's office so that the regular meeting agenda was not posted in a timely manner.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF JANUARY 22, 2014

Minutes were not available.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

The Commission welcomed newly appointed Water Commissioner Ken Kawai and guests Charles Deemer, Jim McGee, Gina Semana.

Mr. Deemer inquired about an article in the February 25, 2014 Los Angeles Times and Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich discussed Water Replenishment District's plan to purchase approximately 60,000 acre-feet of water from Central Basin for replenishment purposes.

In response to Jim McGee's inquiry, Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich stated that the 555 Maple Avenue multi-sports facility has artificial turf and provided information about the Turf Removal Program that went into effect three weeks ago.

7. OLD BUSINESS

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSE MEASURE TO ADDRESS THE DROUGHT SITUATION INCLUDING ACTIVATION OF LEVEL 1 OF THE CITY'S WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE 3717

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided a PowerPoint presentation on the 2014 Drought Response Plan. He described current California drought conditions and Water Supply Conditions as of January 27, 2014, noting that 2013 was the driest calendar year on record. He stated that, although most of California is experiencing major supply deficiencies, the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) service area has sufficient water storage reserves to avert formal water rationing. He reported that Governor Brown declared a Drought State of Emergency on January 17, 2014, asking for 20% voluntary water conservation and providing funding for "shovel-ready" projects that involve water enhancement and reliability. He noted that the Goldsworthy Desalter expansion project, currently in final design, would be eligible. He discussed SB 371 (Steinberg) that directs State agencies to expedite drought projects and sets a July 1, 2014 date for State agencies to approve water recycling and storm water reuse projects.

He showed a map of MWD's service area water supplies, pointing out that 55% of Southern California's water portfolio comes from the Colorado River and State Water Project. He noted that the remaining 45% comes from Los Angeles Aqueduct, conservation, groundwater, recycling, and desalination. He discussed MWD's \$5 billion investment in water storage and reliability programs that include Diamond Valley Lake, groundwater storage programs along the Colorado River and State Water Project aqueducts, conservation programs, and the Integrated Resources incentive program for development of local water supplies. He showed a graph of MWD storage reserves since 2006, noting the 2.4 million acre-feet of storage in 2013.

Public Works Director Beste stated that the difference between the current drought and previous droughts is the amount of available storage. He noted that the focus has been to store water when there is heavy precipitation in order to sustain the water supply even if it only rains three out of 10 years.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich presented a proposed Torrance Response Plan and provided background on the Water Conservation Ordinance implemented in spring 2009 with the goal to reduce wasteful uses of water and promote conservation awareness. He stated that the Ordinance has four stages ranging from a baseline condition to a Level 3 condition, depending on the severity of the water supply situation. He proposed reactivating the Ordinance, currently at baseline stage, to the Level 1 stage that was in effect from 2009 – 2011. He reviewed the list of provisions of the Ordinance and noted that, in addition to permanent measures already in place, the Level 1 stage would prohibit outdoor watering between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., limit outdoor

watering to three days per week, and require water leaks to be fixed within seven days. He recommended accelerating the City's public outreach efforts and conservation program through brochures, website upgrade, CitiCABLE announcements, and bill stuffers.

In response to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiries, staff advised that the Ordinance is City-wide, including Cal Water customers, and has no time limit.

Responding to Commissioner Marshall's concern about MWD declaring a Water Supply Allocation, Public Works Director explained that any allocation formula uses a multiple year baseline and would not penalize successful conservation efforts.

Senior Water Services Supervisor Berndt provided clarification that the automated electronic read registers (AMRs) have the ability to monitor daily water usage on a case-by-case basis for up to 90 days.

MOTION: Commissioner Leone moved to recommend that City Council support the activation of Level 1 of the City's Water Conservation Ordinance and to implement various measures to address the drought situation. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Craft).

8B. CONSIDERATION REGARDING PROPOSED NEW STATE LEGISLATION (AB 2189-GARCIA) THAT IMPACTS GROUNDWATER REPLENISHMENT ASSESSMENT

Public Works Director Beste provided background regarding responsibilities of the Water Replenishment District (WRD) and various attempts over the last eight years by agencies in the Central Basin to sponsor legislation to replace the current uniform replenishment assessment (RA) with a split assessment for the Central and West Basin pumpers. He explained that WRD levies a RA charge for each acre-foot of groundwater extracted from the basins and that the RA has been established as a uniform rate for all pumpers in both basins since 1959. He noted that over the years most of the Central Basin agencies that originally supported a split RA have rescinded their support for it but that the Cities of Downey, Cerritos, and Signal Hill still support it.

He reported that last week Assembly Member Christine Garcia introduced a new bill Assembly Bill 2189 that is attempting to create a split RA within both basins by tying it to Proposition 218. He stated that the bill would require WRD to adopt all future RAs through the Proposition 218 process, requiring a cost of service analysis, and to establish a separate rate for each well site based on a proportional cost to replenish the basin in the area of the well. He stated that Proposition 218 should not apply to WRD because it is a groundwater replenishment agency, not a retailer or wholesaler of water supplies; however, due to ongoing litigation, WRD held a 218 hearing in setting its fiscal 2013-14 RA. He discussed reasons why the bill is highly flawed and requested that the Commission take a position recommending that City Council formally oppose AB 2189.

MOTION: Commissioner Marshall moved to concur with staff recommendation to recommend that City Council oppose AB 2189. Commissioner Leone seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Craft).

9. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich noted that a February 11, 2014 News Release from MWD was included in agenda packets. Referring to the charts of Water Supply Conditions as of February 23, 2014, he reported that the Northern Sierra snowpack is 13% of normal but that the Upper Colorado River Basin snowpack is 110% of normal.

Responding to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste explained that Lake Mead and Lake Powell are so large that it would take multiple wet years to fill them.

10. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich reported that at the last West Basin Water Association meeting there was an excellent presentation about the drought situation and that the Water Master reported that the West Basin is pumping less water than last year at this time. He expressed his appreciation to Commissioners who attended the meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to accept and file the West Basin Water Association report. Commissioner Kawai seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Craft).

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Senior Water Services Supervisor Berndt noted that the Monthly Department Report for January 2014 was included in agenda packets. He noted the 18% increase in production of potable water compared to January 2013. He reported five water main breaks in January compared to seven for the same period last year. He stated that the Goldsworthy Desalter is performing satisfactorily and that final design for its expansion is expected by this summer. He reported that the change out program to replace meter registers with automated electronic read registers (AMRs) is near completion. He noted that AMRs are very accurate and that there have been some customer complaints about higher water bills.

Responding to Commissioner McGee's inquiry regarding the Yukon property, Public Works Director Beste stated that Phase 1 has been completed, that the next phase is in the design stage, and that they are looking at funding options with the Finance Department that include the possibility of refinancing existing bonds.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Deemer, he stated that pilot wells were drilled behind Hamilton School and La Carretera Park, the water quality looks good, but that they want to complete the Yukon well first.

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to accept and file the Monthly Department Report for January 2014. Commissioner Kawai seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Craft).

12. ORALS

12A. Commissioners welcomed Commissioner Kawai who provided his background and stated that he is looking forward to working with Commissioners.

12B. Commissioner See discussed recent tree removal, sidewalk repair, and sprinkler system repair in his neighborhood.

12C. Public Works Director Beste commended Commissioner McGee for his 25 years of service to the City.

12D. Commissioner Marshall voiced his opposition to ongoing lawsuits and legal fees and questioned if the City should support Utah's proposal to cut the water off from the N.S.A.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:08 p.m., Commissioner See moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, March 26, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner McGee seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Nishinaga so ordered.

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Approved as submitted April 23, 2014 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
